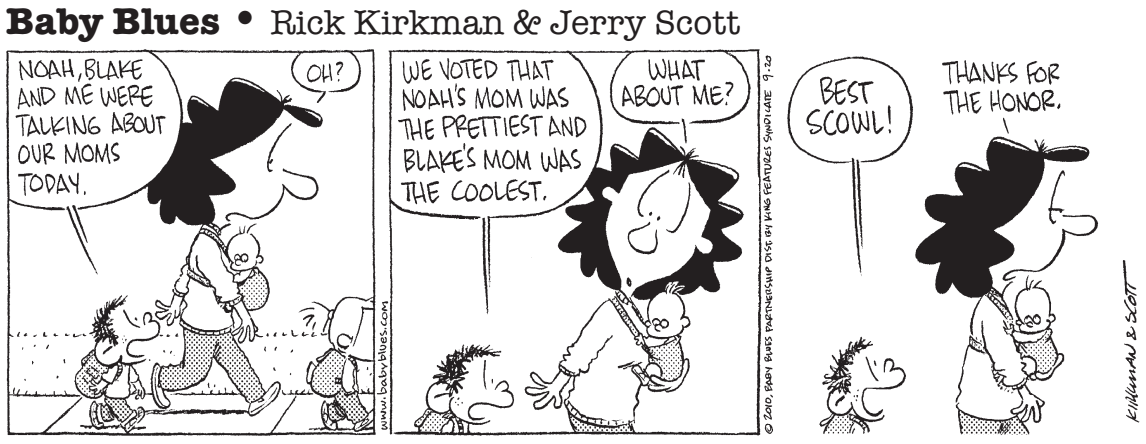
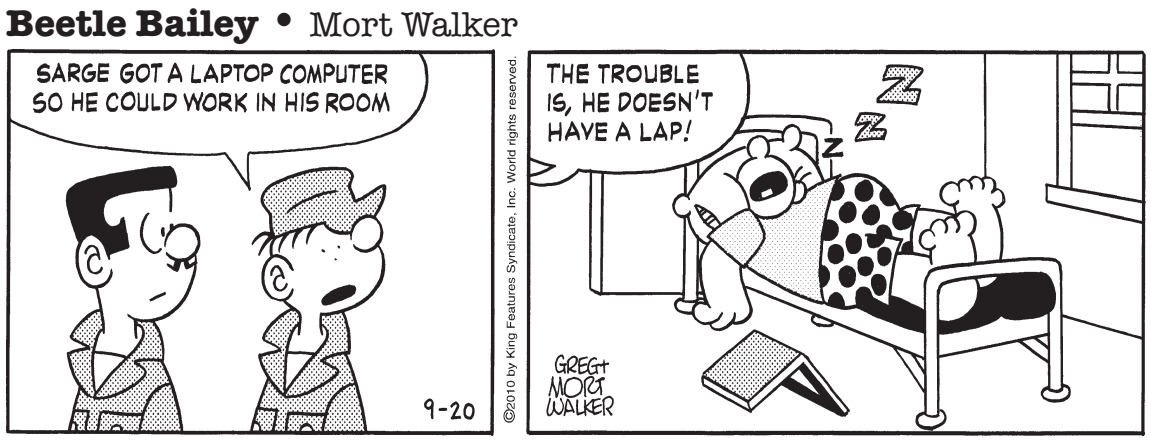
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

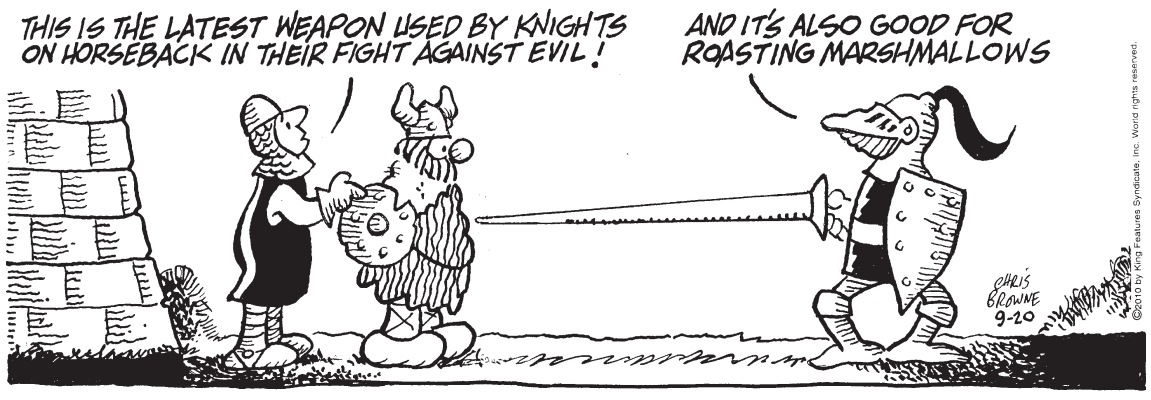


Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



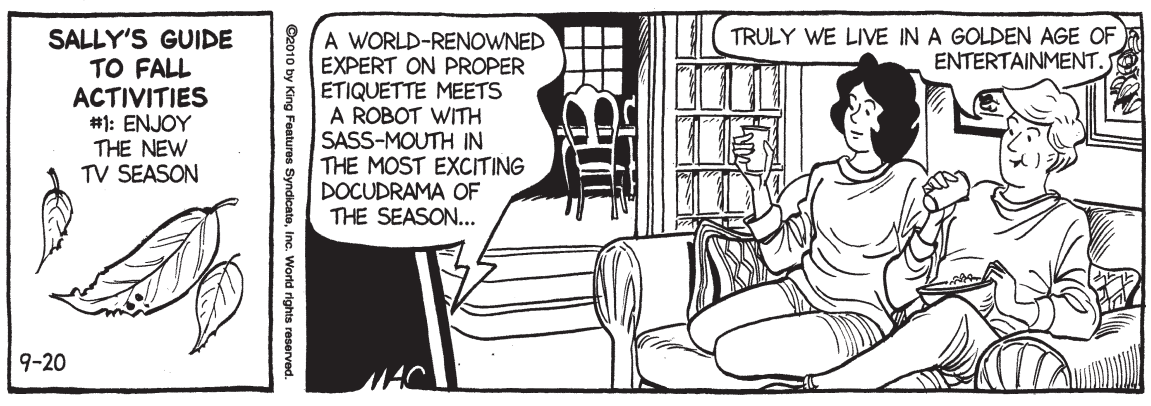
Blondie • Chic Young

Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

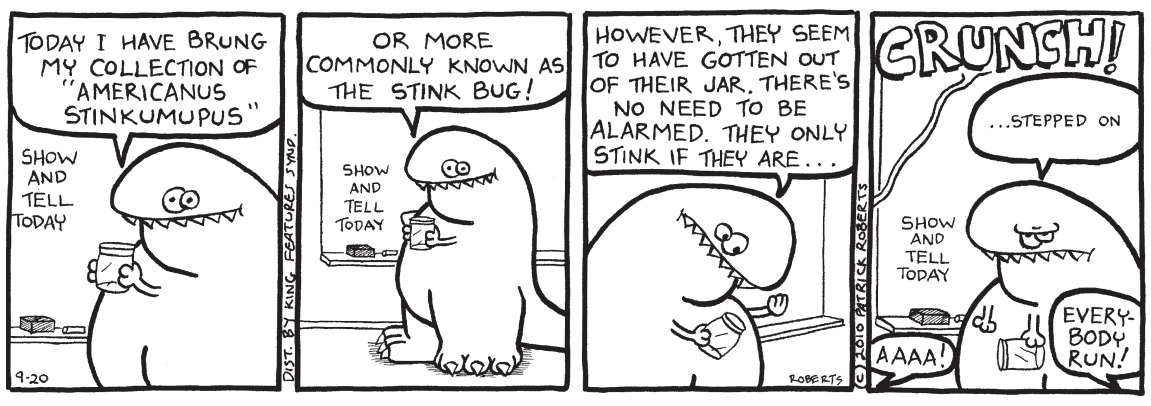


Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott

Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Adult son hides credit card usage

Dear Dr. Brothers: We never allowed our son to have a credit card at college, but now he is working, it seemed appropriate. The problem is he doesn't seem clear on what he is buying, whether he is paying the bills and how much he is letting by. When we broach the subject, he says it is "taken care of." He lives in an apartment, so we can't look over his shoulder! – H.C.

Dear H.C.: This may come as a bit of a shock, but it sounds as though your son has grown up and is taking on responsibilities without help from Mom and Dad. He has a degree, a job, an apartment and his own friends, as well as a paycheck and a credit card. You should pat yourselves on the back for a job well done – a lot of families are in worse shape, and many college grads are still looking for their first job a year later. So your son must have something going for him, and I wouldn't recommend looking over his shoulder.

I am sure it is worrisome when you get vague answers to your questions. It could be he's not quite on top of things, he has gone overboard with spending – that first job doesn't always pay well, and independent living expenses are always a shock – or he doesn't understand the system. After all, more mature people have gotten into credit card trouble; it's easy to do. But he could be just trying to get you to stop treating him like a baby. Perhaps you could have one last talk to see if he "gets it," and then let him take charge.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I've been working on this for years. I'd wanted to do my job from home so I could be there when my kids come home from school. I only need a desk, phone and computer. Finally my company relented, but after six months, I find my work suffering. I don't miss the office; I just can't work. I sit most of the day and watch TV. What am I going to do? Help! – B.G.

Dear B.G.: Don't panic! It sounds as though this is one of those cases of "be careful what you wish for." You spent so much time fantasizing about working from home, being there for your kids, you forgot to imagine realities. And though you don't miss the office, there are interpersonal dynamics that make the office environment stimulating. That isn't happening at home, and you are trying to fill the gap by escaping into TV. At the same time, the drudgery of work was something you forgot to import. Your view of work was not marred by the actual routine, was it?

What you are left with is an unstructured environment that's different from an office. Even when left to do your own thing, there is a rhythm to the workday when you go to your place of business. I think if you set up detailed schedules, you will get on track. You still can leave an hour for television, but schedule the important stuff, or you're going to be looking for another job.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ J 10
♥ Q 10 5
♦ Q J 5
♣ 9 8 5 4 2

WEST
♠ K 6 2
♥ A 9 7 4 3 2
♦ 8 7
♣ Q 3

EAST
♠ 9 7 5 4 3
♥ 8
♦ 10 9 3
♣ A J 7 6

SOUTH
♠ A Q 8
♥ K J 6
♦ A K 6 4 2
♣ K 10

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♥	Dble	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	

Opening lead — four of hearts.

Famous Hand

This deal occurred in the semifinal match between China and the United States at the 2009 world team championship held in Sao Paulo.

The bidding shown took place when a Chinese pair held the North-South cards. South's opening club bid was strong and artificial, and North's double of one heart showed some values, after which the bidding followed normal lines.

Nick Nickell, West, led a heart, taken in dummy by the queen. Declarer then led the jack of spades, and Nickell made what proved to be the key play, allowing the jack to hold. South then repeated the finesse, whereupon Nickell won with the king and returned a third spade to South's ace, establishing two spade winners for East.

Declarer could still have gotten home safely had he elected to play East for the ace of clubs, but with only eight tricks in view and little knowledge of how the East-West cards were actually divided, he tried for his ninth trick by leading a heart. Nickell rose with the ace and shifted to a club, and East's ace and two good spades put South down one.

While Nickell should be given full credit for his excellent defense, the fact remains that declarer had only himself to blame for the outcome. He opened the door to defeat, and Nickell happily walked right through it.

After the spade jack held at trick two, all South had to do was to lead a heart to establish his ninth trick. West could take the ace or refuse it, as he pleased, but there was no way declarer could be prevented from scoring two spades, two hearts and five diamonds for his contract.

Given that the world team championship is scored by International Match Points, which puts a premium on bidding and making contracts, with overtricks of little consequence, it may seem surprising that a player at this level could make such a mistake. The most likely explanation is that the stress and fatigue caused by playing two straight weeks against the world's best players had taken its toll, as it has on many other such occasions in the past.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane

"You should save it for later. Mommy is outside."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

1		7				8		5
	4			1			2	
8		9			5	1		3
		1	3		4			
	9			5			1	
			2		1	7		
2		5	7			3		1
	1			3			7	
7		6				9		4

Difficulty Level ★ 9/20

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This is a logic-based number placement puzzle.

The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral.

The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

9	5	6	3	4	8	1	2	7
4	2	8	1	6	7	5	9	3
7	1	3	5	9	2	6	4	8
3	7	2	8	1	9	4	6	5
5	4	1	2	3	6	8	7	9
6	8	9	4	7	5	2	3	1
2	3	5	7	8	4	9	1	6
1	6	4	9	5	3	7	8	2
8	9	7	6	2	1	3	5	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 9/17

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Cryptoquip

AQBUD ETD PLE FMFQX YPA FRAQBI QB HLRBE RH TQA SLPYQBI UXPAA, ETPE ZPSD TQZ P ZRSDX AEMSDBE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER THE SHUTTLE WAS OFF THE GROUND, THE ASTRONAUTS CELEBRATED WITH A BIG LAUNCH LUNCH.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Ocho-cinco of the NFL
5 Half a score
8 Slam-dance
12 Tax
13 "— Little Teapot"
14 Busy with
15 Ugandan despot
16 One of the Caesars
18 Render weapon-less
20 Broken-bone support
21 Tsp. or tbsp.
23 [With errors un-changed]
24 Monarch with limitless power
28 Pinches
31 Eisen-hower
32 Forest trees
34 Rd.
35 Reps.' rivals
37 Group of specta-tors
39 Energy
41 "Grease" actress Conn
42 Showed off the muscles
45 Country
49 Viennese, for instance
51 Base runner's goal
52 Assess
53 Needle hole
54 Rams' mates
55 Has to
56 Aachen article
57 Carry on

DOWN
1 Dressed (in)
2 Half (Pref.)
3 Bird, to Brutus
4 Forceful person
5 Jamaican coffee liqueur
6 Ostrich's cousin
7 Com-plains constantly
8 Curtain fabric
9 One with a lot of con-tacts?
10 Dazzle
11 Emcee
17 Boom times
19 LP's and CD's (Abbr.)
22 Health (Sp.)
24 Help
25 43-Down music-maker
26 Storms
27 Swanson product
29 Insulation material, for short
30 Witness
33 Verdi opera
36 Two trios
38 This or that, it doesn't matter which
40 Apiece
42 Mac-Donald's place
43 Waikiki wingding
44 Conked out
46 "The Music Man" setting
47 Portent
48 Bird's home
50 Nay opposer

Solution time: 27 mins.

T	O	M	■	S	L	A	W	■	X	R	A	Y
A	R	I	■	H	E	I	R	■	Y	O	R	E
P	A	N	A	T	E	L	A	■	L	E	E	S
E	L	I	X	I	R	■	P	O	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	I	C	Y	■	P	A	M	E	L	A
S	N	E	A	K	■	D	E	F	■	M	I	D
P	O	L	L	■	S	I	R	■	T	I	M	E
A	G	E	■	A	T	M	■	B	O	R	O	N
N	O	V	E	L	A	■	R	E	P	■	■	■
■	■	■	T	A	R	■	A	M	A	Z	O	N
D	I	S	H	■	V	U	V	U	Z	E	L	A
A	L	O	E	■	E	K	E	S	■	A	I	R
B	L	U	R	■	D	E	L	E	■	L	O	Y

Saturday's answer 9-20

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19		■	20					
■	■	■	21			22	■	23			■	■
24	25	26					27	■	28		29	30
31			■	32				33	■	34		
35			36	■	37				38			
■	■	39		40	■	41				■	■	■
42	43				44	■	45			46	47	48
49						50		■	51			
52				■	53			■	54			
55				■	56			■	57			